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EDITORIAL COMMENT



THE COLOGNE CONGRESS

MISS DOCK writes: "The Congress of the International Council of Nurses in Cologne has been a brilliant and important occasion, bringing surprise and joy even to those who have come to expect great things from the international meetings, and causing real ecstasy among those whose first visit to such a gathering it has been. Even the most self-effacing nurse has realized with surprise and gratification that our world-association is an important one and our world-meetings of consequence to the countries where they occur. The city of Cologne was a most charming, poetic setting for our gathering. Here is in perfection the characteristically German spirit combined of art, music, legend, poetry, and history which makes its influence felt throughout, and with it, the German scientific thoroughness and the open hospitality of the Rhine country.

"Nowhere else has our Congress been so much the centre of active interest and hard work by the women of the laity as here. In Cologne, all the various groups of women of social prominence and public spirit have been for months preparing a reception and a programme for us in consonance with their own ideas of what was fitting, which has been far beyond any that we could have entertained for ourselves. Then from governmental side have we had unusual attention. The German government sent formal notices of our coming Congress to all countries, and it would be interesting indeed to read the replies from Uncle Sam and John Bull, which are lying in the minister's office in Berlin! The city of Cologne gave a little ticket for twenty-four cents which allowed free rides all week on the tram cars, as often as one liked, while all the

museums and art collections were opened free to the members. Finally, the city entertained the Congress members at a most beautiful garden-party in the Flora, or public floral garden, where music, refreshments, and the lovely park made a gay scene.

"On Sunday evening the Congress was opened by a reception in the stately and richly ornamented Hall of the Gürzenich, which was built in the fifteenth century for festival purposes and for the functions of civic hospitality. Its mediæval beauty alone would have lent dignity and picturesqueness to the meetings, and gave a perfect setting to the tableaux or living pictures which had been adapted from a history of nursing by the ladies of the city. To the preparation of these tableaux musicians and artists had brought their treasures. The glorious organ, orchestral, and vocal accompaniments of the pictures had been composed for the occasion. A herald in mediæval draperies read with dramatic eloquence the poetic lines which had been composed to laud the deeds of sainted women in nursing. The pictures themselves were true works of art, quite indescribable, and the last, when fifty or more nurses, some in ancient historic dress and others in modern uniform, the English Leagues bearing their banners, all moved forward from the audience to group themselves about the snowy figure of Hygeia, created wild enthusiasm, not only among the nurses, but among the others present. To complete this truly rare occasion, the Congress was entranced by a song recital given by the Cologne Männerchor, one of the famous choruses of the world.

"The official programme on Monday went off without a hitch. Mrs. Fenwick gave the watchword for the coming three years—*Aspiration*. Sister Agnes Karll pronounced a memorial to the dead, those who have been taken since the last Congress: Miss Stewart, Mrs. Robb, Mrs. Treacy, Dr. Lande, and Miss Thorpe. Her words were followed by a low chorale played upon the great organ. India and New Zealand were received into membership. Resolutions in favor of state registration and woman suffrage were adopted unanimously. Finally, the invitation of California was enthusiastically accepted and the next triennial meeting set for 1915. The executive committee had desired to elect as president a woman who belonged to the far west, but the one who, possessing all the necessary qualities and the support of her vast section, seemed a logical candidate possessed the title of doctor as well as that of nurse, and it was decided that this might mislead and appear as a contradiction of our root principles, to give office only to nurses.

"Miss Goodrich, who is personally known to and warmly admired by

our foreign members, was their final choice as the International President for the coming term."

We are sure the news of Miss Goodrich's election as president of the International Congress will be a great satisfaction to American nurses. She is one of our few leaders in the educational field who is so situated that she is able to present advanced standards unrestricted. We may be assured that under her guidance a progressive and interesting programme will be arranged for the meeting in 1915.

COMPULSORY LAWS FOR STATE REGISTRATION

IN the papers and discussions at the Chicago convention, the idea was brought out, over and over again, that, taken as a whole, the laws for state registration, as they stand, are deplorably inadequate and defective. At the same time, from every state and by every speaker the fact was emphasized that registration, even in those states where the laws are most unsatisfactory, is having a beneficial and uplifting effect upon the training schools and is improving the status of nursing. It is to be remembered, when considering such criticism of inefficiency, that not in one instance that we can recall has a bill become a law as it was first drafted by the nurses, but that the statutes came out of the different legislatures mutilated and reconstructed to meet the demands of commercial and political interests.

The fact that laws so poor are working such a benefit is the strongest kind of an argument to take before the legislatures in asking for amendments that will make the requirements mandatory upon all nurses practising their profession within the state. By this we do not mean that the standards for registration should be arbitrarily raised in a way to demoralize the training schools, but that such as they are, they shall apply to every woman who is doing nursing for pay, in the same way that registration laws apply to other professions and occupations.

We have said many times before that in bringing about reforms in nursing education we must be satisfied to work slowly. We must consider the small hospitals, without endowment, that are doing honest work in their communities where changes can only be made very slowly and with intervals for adjustment. From the greater hospitals with large endowments, where money is being spent freely for buildings and equipment, we believe it is only reasonable to expect that in the nursing department, upon which depends the personal care of the patients for whom the hospitals are established, development should be more rapid than in the isolated institutions already referred to. It has never been

expected that the greater schools of the country would hold themselves down to the minimum requirements of a law, which standard is the very lowest that the state can accept from its poorest schools. There should be as great a difference between the heavily endowed hospitals in our great centres and the small village institution as there is between the great universities of the country and the smaller colleges in isolated places.

No one has supposed for a moment that the standards of the laws for state registration as first secured were to be permanent, but that such enactments were only the entering wedge, to be broadened and developed as rapidly as, having fulfilled their first purpose, progress might come to a standstill. In amending these laws, a complete reconstruction of the best ones will not be necessary, simply the taking up of one or two points at a time, asking for such improvements as experience has found are most needed. As we have already stated, making registration apply to all women doing nursing for pay, state provision for an inspection of training schools, where such has not been secured, a definite preliminary education, where such a requirement does not exist, reciprocity with all states of the same standards are among the first points to be taken up, one or two at a time, to bring the standards of all the states into greater uniformity.

Of course in making laws compulsory, even in those states where the term of the waiver has expired, another waiver must be provided by which all those women, who have failed to secure registration under the voluntary laws, are again given an opportunity to do so before the law becomes mandatory. Miss Goodrich brought out this point in her paper read at the Joint Session and published in this JOURNAL. We must expect that it will take a term of years before we can have all of the women who are in nursing work under state supervision. Not only the unregistered graduate nurse but the reputable practical nurse must be provided for.

The medical profession is agitating for state appropriations to carry forward the work of medical registration, where the fees from applicants are not sufficient to cover fully the expenses of the board. The need of such appropriations for the nurse boards of examiners is already felt, and it would be well for these two departments of education to bring forward their claims at the same time, as the general public profits by the more highly educated physician and nurse. We believe this to be a more just way of meeting the expenses of the boards than increasing the fees of applicants.

PROGRESS OF STATE REGISTRATION

LOUISIANA.—The Louisiana bill published in this issue of the *JOURNAL* seems to us to be an exceedingly able document, although it provides for a board of examiners composed entirely of physicians. Notwithstanding this fact, nominations for membership on this board must be submitted to the governor by the Louisiana State Nurses' Association. The announcement has been made in these pages before that the constitution of the state prohibits women from serving on public boards. There is a strong movement on foot at the present time in the state to bring about such constitutional amendments as will remove this prohibition. When this has been accomplished the nurses hope to be able to substitute a board of nurses for the present board of medical men. Although it is such a short time since the Louisiana bill became a law, the nurses are already considering amendments that will make registration compulsory.

It is to be noted that with a board of medical men the compensation provided is \$10 a day, while in the great majority of the states where such laws have been secured, the compensation to nurses has been \$5 or less.

OVERSTRAIN OF NURSES

ONE of the sessions at the Cologne Congress, over which Miss Nutting presided, was on overstrain of nurses. In this issue of the *JOURNAL* we present two contributions dealing with the subject of the shortage of pupils in training schools, by women of large experience in training-school work, which show that poor food and overstrain have more to do with keeping good women out of our schools than anything else. We endorse most emphatically the statements made by Miss Scovil in her article and by "R. A. S." in her letter to the editor.

Because of the nature of nurses' work, the personal care of the sick and dying, the profession has been very loath to enter into open discussion of a subject which seemed to put the welfare of the nurse into prominence, but we have had so many instances of promising women leaving a school at the end of the probation period, and of valuable workers being lost from just such causes, that we think the time has come when, with the discussion at the Cologne Congress to lead the way, there should be an open and persistent disclosure of bad conditions where they exist, even to the temporary detriment of the institutions concerned. If every superintendent of a hospital or a training school, whether man or woman, would quietly and sanely, but continually, keep this matter before the board of managers, and if the affiliated members

of the American Nurses' Association would promote this subject at the same time, the public would be stirred to as great consideration for the people who are taking care of the sick, insane and dying as they are for securing shorter hours and better hygienic conditions for the women in factories.

Every reform has to be preceded by a period of education through agitation. The time has come to agitate this subject.

LOW STANDARDS FOR INDIAN NURSES

THERE has been coming to our desk, in exchange, since first the JOURNAL came into existence, a little magazine published at the Indian School at Phoenix, Arizona, the printing of which is very creditably done by the Indian students. The request for such an exchange was made soon after the establishment of the JOURNAL OF NURSING by one of the officers of the school, and although it is not our custom to exchange with so small a publication, we made the exception in this case because it was one of the government schools for the education of the Indian.

We learn from this little journal that among the projects now being considered for the coming year is the establishment of a training school for nurses in connection with the hospital and sanatoria of the school,—all of which is most commendable, but the age requirement is to be only sixteen years, and the educational standard, the sixth grade in school. Every intelligent person appreciates the fact that no girl of sixteen is sufficiently developed to be trusted as a nurse, as we now consider the term, and if it is impossible to raise the age limit and the educational standard, this is one of the cases where the term nurse should be replaced by that of attendant.

PLANS FOR THE NEXT CONVENTION

Now is the time when either individual members or associations having suggestions to offer for the next programme should put them into shape and send them to the chairman of the programme committee, Miss MacMillan, Presbyterian Hospital, Chicago. Subjects upon which papers and discussions are desired, or special departments of nursing work for which section meetings are wanted come under this head, and the earlier the committee knows what the members wish, the more efficiently can plans be made.

There was more or less confusion in Chicago, because of the fact that, on account of the great crowd, the convention had to be moved from the Auditorium Hotel to Orchestra Hall, consequently the arrangements for rooms for the special sessions were not as convenient as they would have

been if the original plans could have been carried out, but after that experience, and especially at Atlantic City where the facilities for other great conventions will be at our command, it is to be hoped that these arrangements can be much better. Even with the disadvantages of moving, all of those who took part in the special sessions have asked that they be repeated, which is proof of their success.

We want to repeat here, what we have said previously, that as the Association increases in numbers and becomes more unwieldy, in order to limit the time for papers, to adhere strictly to the programme, and to allow as much time as possible for discussion, we shall have to follow the custom of other large societies and have a speaker rapped down when she has reached the limit of her time, that she may not trespass upon time that has been allotted to another, nor upon the patience of her audience, nor curtail chance for discussion.

What we need in papers is the essence of a subject, not introductions or explanations, but the subject-matter expressed in the fewest possible words and with each point made clear.

This is not in any sense a criticism of the work that has been done in the past. When the Association was smaller, such arbitrary regulations were not necessary, but with the great gatherings we have had for the past two years, it is becoming important to consider such rulings. We are making this suggestion so that, if such a request has to be enforced, members need not be embarrassed or taken by surprise.

A MILESTONE

WE wish to remind the owners of the JOURNAL—all the members of the American Nurses' Association—that with this number the JOURNAL completes its twelfth year. Nearly one thousand subscriptions have been added to its roll during the past year, and a number of states have made it their official organ, which strengthens and broadens its influence. The first object of the JOURNAL is educational; through it the nurses of the whole country are brought into closer relationship, and by it all members may work together for the highest ideals. It is the vehicle for the promotion of those standards agreed upon by the American Nurses' Association and for the projects in which the Association is interested. But the most valuable thing about it to its readers are those lessons which have been learned by the actual experience of workers in every field of nursing, and articles of this kind appear in every issue.

When the JOURNAL was commenced, twelve years ago, all contributions were voluntary. That such excellent material was furnished, year after year, from professional motives is a proof of the loyalty of nurses

to their work, to their magazine, and to each other. We have now reached the point where it is possible to compensate all those who work regularly for its pages, on a uniform basis, and all material prepared especially for it is paid for, except articles which have been delivered as lectures or read as papers, and the correspondence in the letter department.

The influence of the JOURNAL in all these years upon our various projects, beginning with the course at Teachers' College and on through the problems of state registration, is impossible to estimate, only those who have it in charge know how the nurses of the country turn to it for every sort of information, help and advice.

We have some new plans in mind for the coming year which we hope to announce in the next number.

CHANGES IN THE PACIFIC COAST JOURNAL

WITH the August issue, the *Pacific Coast Journal* changed its name from *Nurses' Journal of the Pacific Coast* to *The Pacific Coast Journal of Nursing* and its former editor again took the management in her hands. This journal, which was started eight years ago, and which has been the greatest force in buiding up organization work on the Pacific Coast, owed its success in the beginning very largely to the hard pioneer work and business sagacity of its first editor, Genevieve Cooke. As is often the case with successful ventures, there was, after a time, a lack of loyalty from nurses who should have been her strongest supporters, and this, in connection with a serious illness, led to Miss Cooke's resignation three years ago. Since that time the magazine has not progressed, either professionally or financially, and Miss Cooke's good work has been better appreciated, until such pressure has been brought to bear upon her that she has very reluctantly accepted the post of editor again and must once more do almost pioneer work to restore it to its original place of influence.

Because of the great distance between the East and West, we have always held that the *Pacific Coast Journal* was needed, and we shall hope to see it grow stronger with each succeeding year.